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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION VII
726 MINNESOTA AVENUE
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS 66101

MAY 05 1988

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Cherokee County Site Visit, April 7-8, 1988

FROM: Alice C. Fuerst *ACF*
REMD/SPFD

TO: Files

On April 7-8, Alice Fuerst and Dave Sheridan, Corps of Engineers, visited the Cherokee County site. We first met with Bill Crossgrove and Jerry Flynn. They wanted to show us areas of mining activity north of the area that EPA has included in the alternative water supply boundaries. They first took us to three discharges located in T34S, R25E, Section 11. These were located just east of Jerry Flynn's house along an intermittent stream. One of the discharges was through a casing. The areas around each of these discharges were red in color. There are several prospect holes in this general area also. These were located in the northern half of Section 11. They then took us to Section 3 where they showed us an area that had been mined. This was evident by the pits in the area and the amount of chat that was near the pits. It was apparent there had been discharges from one of these pits. Years ago, a resident drilled a 20-foot well and had to abandon it shortly because it drew in red water. At the same time as that well was pumping, one of the discharges went dry. They then took us to an area in the southeast quarter of Section 2 and showed us an area of mining. There was a concrete-lined shaft in this area along with numerous amounts of chat. Stories are that this was one of the largest mining production areas.

They then took us over to meet with Jack Boyes, County Commissioner. Mr. Boyes wanted to show us a subsidence area in Section 22, T33S, R25E. This subsidence has been filled with trash. The county has tried to keep this from happening, although they had little luck. The KDHE has sent out notices about the dumping into the subsidence. Mr. Boyes wanted me to see it in case there was anything EPA could do to assist them. Mr. Boyes drove us around portions of the Badger subsite and pointed out several of the mining areas.



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Sheridan and I then visited the rest of the Cherokee County site on our own. We went back to the Badger area to look at some of the mining areas. Around the Peacock Mine, there are two large piles of chat and bullrock. There was what appeared to be a large amount of chat near the Chicago mine. Other signs of mining activity in that subsite were scattered. In the Lawton subsite, the chat piles were isolated and not real large. There were only a few areas of chat piles remaining. We were not able to observe much of the Waco subsite as the roads to the area had been closed. According to the map, there were several areas of tailings ponds potentially covering a couple of miles. From what we could see, there were large piles of material in the Waco subsite.

We next visited the Galena subsite. We walked around Hell's Half Acre to give Sheridan an idea of what will be necessary for the remedial action. We walked along Short Creek near the Main Street bridge to show where the Short Creek will need to be lined. We also observed the monitoring station on the Main Street bridge and at Station No. 4. We walked around the Blue Hole area and drove through the area southwest of town, around the city dump area. We walked around briefly on the area south of 21st Street. This area contained the stone-lined channels and remains of the old milling operations. We next drove to the Lowell area and drove briefly around the streets of that community.

In the Baxter Springs subsite, we went to Sections 34 and 35, T34S, R24E to observe the acid mine drainage into Willow Creek. We observed water leaving Pickrell property. There had been complaints on this area of discharge of acid mine drainage to Willow Creek. I observed that on the east side of the road, there was a new discharge that had developed. I did not observe it actually draining into Willow Creek, although the orange water was ponding on the Willow Creek floodplain. This property appears to belong to Floyd Burrows, Route 2, Box 404, Baxter Springs. The chat piles in Section 35, T34S, R24E appear to be actively being reprocessed. We drove through Baxter Springs subsite along the section road to get an indication of the activity in the Baxter Springs area. We did not get the opportunity to walk back into the areas where there had been much mining activity.

In the Treece subsite, we observed the two diversions constructed by Region VI. The eastern-most structure in Section 2, T35S, R23E appear to be in good condition. The ring dike around the subsidence area was ruffraff on one portion and had grasses on the remainder. The stream had been dammed up, creating a pond on a portion of the stream. This dammed area appeared in good condition. The immediate area around the main stream needed reseeding, although appeared to be in good

condition. The second diversion area appeared to be in good shape. We drove around briefly in the Treece and Picher areas to see the massive chat piles in those areas.

On April 7, we went back to the Galena area to drive along several of the roads where the waterlines for the alternative water supply will need to be installed. Sheridan wanted to see what conditions they will have to work under. He was observing the amount of right-of-way along the road sides, whether or not it was possible to put water lines in the right-of-ways or whether they would have to be in the streets. The steering committee stated that they thought the water lines would have to go on the property owners side of the road, instead of in the right-of-ways. Much of that area is wooded and therefore is not possible to install water lines without removing trees.

We next drove through portions of the Jasper County site on the Missouri side of the Tri-State District. The area west of Webb City looks alot like the Galena area with piles of chat and mine waste materials. I observed one stream that had red precipitate on the bottom of the stream. We drove north of Webb City through the Sunset Mine area and the Yellow Dog American Beauty Mine. We also stopped at the Oronogo Circle Mine. Oronogo Circle Mine is a very large subsidence that is filled with water. That water body is now used as a commercial recreational facility for scuba diving. The area around there physically looked much like the area southwest the town of Galena.

cc: Dave Sheridan, COE

